

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A memory associated with a programmable TV recorder storing a list of authorized usernames and computer readable instructions for programming a processor to monitor an input port capable of receiving schedule and software updates for a TV program recording recommendation, to extract a username from the recommendation, to compare the extracted username to the list of authorized usernames, and to accept the recommendation when the processor determines the extracted username is an authorized username.

2. The memory as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of accepting the recommendation comprises:

displaying for a list of recommendations in association with the username extracted from the recommendation;

allowing an owner of the programmable TV recorder to enable or reject each displayed recommendation on the list; and

recording TV programs identified in the enabled recommendations and not recording TV programs identified in the rejected recommendations.

3. The memory as recited in claim 2, wherein:

the list of usernames comprise a first group of usernames and a mutually exclusive second list of usernames; and

wherein the step of accepting the recommendations includes automatically enabling recommendations if the username extracted therefrom is in the first list and displaying on the list of recommendations other recommendations when the username extracted therefrom is on the second list

4. The memory as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of accepting the recommendation comprises recording a TV program which is identified in the recommendation.

5. A memory associated with a programmable TV recorder storing computer readable instructions for programming a processor to monitor an input port capable of receiving schedule and software updates for a remote command, to extract a username and verification protocol from the remote command, to compare the extracted username and verification protocol to a stored username and verification protocol, and to update a TV program recording schedule as instructed by the remote command when the processor determines that the stored username and verification protocol match the extracted username and verification protocol.

6. A programmable TV recorder that can be remotely controlled and which records television program signals, comprising:

monitoring circuitry, which monitors a signal stream for a program recording recommendation;

means which extract a username from the recording recommendation and which generate a match signal when stored usernames include the extracted username; and

control circuitry, which effects a programmed response in response to the match signal.

7. The programmable TV recorder as recited in claim 6, wherein the programmed response comprises addition of the recording recommendation to a recording schedule.

8. The programmable recorder as recited in claim 6, wherein the programmed response comprises addition of a recording recommendation to a list of recommended recording events.

9. The programmable recorder as recited in claim 6, wherein:

the programmable recorder further comprises a communications means for communication between the programmable recorder and a schedule server; and

monitoring means, for monitoring a signal stream received via the communications means for the recording recommendation.

10. The programmable recorder as recited in claim 6, wherein:

the stored usernames comprise a first list of usernames and a mutually exclusive second list of usernames;

the match signal comprises first and second match signals;

the means generate the first match signal when the extracted username is in the first list and the second match signal when the extracted username is in the second list;

the programmed response comprises addition of the recording recommendation to a recording schedule in response to the first match signal; and

the programmed response comprises addition of a recording recommendation to a list of recommended recording events in response to the second match signal.

11. A programmable television recorder that can be remotely controlled and which records TV program signals, comprising:

means for monitoring a signal stream for one of a recording recommendation and a remote command;

means for extracting a username from the recording recommendation and for extracting the username and associated verification protocol from a remote command;

means for distinguishing between the recording recommendation and the remote command based on the username and associated verification protocol;

means for storing the recording recommendation to a list of recommended recording events; and

means for effecting the remote command to thereby modify the recording schedule, wherein the distinguishing means permits operation of a selected one of the storing means and the effecting means.

12. The programmable recorder as recited in claim 11, wherein:

the programmable recorder further comprises means for communicating between the programmable recorder and a schedule server; and

the monitoring means monitors the signal stream received via the communicating means for the recording recommendation and the remote command.

13. A signal for remotely controlling the recording schedule of a programmable television recorder including a controller which is responsive to the signal, the signal comprising an electronic message including a username, a verification protocol, and an identification of a television program recommended for recording from a person who is identified by the username.